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Motivations from Kartarpur Corridor: Importance of secular identity in religious democracies like Pakistan

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Abstract. The case presents the importance of space for secular voices within a religious democracy like Pakistan where laws present the facilitation of Islamic religion but in larger ambit of secular motivations identified by old British Raj. Based on a multicultural and postmodern motivations that come with globalization and its technology orientation, democracy that is itself a contemporary solution for multi ethnic and multi sectarian co-existence demands that local interpretation of law should then be generalized towards secular stream of application that promotes material and religious empowerment without discrimination. Development of Kartarpur Corridor to facilitate millions from Sikh community who reside outside Pakistan and especially in India to visit their most holy shrines placed in Pakistan is a very valid example where religious identity other than Islam in Muslim majority Pakistan is given due importance so that the borders between the two countries, that spend most of the time being hostile to each other (Mamoon & Murshed, 2010), immaterial to make up global citizenship into a local one.

Keywords. Democracy, Secular identity.


JEL. A10, A14, B29.


1. An introduction to: Respect from one religion to the other

The subject of marketing is all about trying to create long lasting impression of the product in subconscious mind so that the product and its associated impression becomes the part and parcel of every day decision making of the individual. Marketing campaigns by the multinationals create an idea of a postmodern life style by choosing expressions and images that has been vital for the understanding of common globalized culture. Thus a similar strategy has to be evolved to place the importance of democratic values into the subconscious of the populations in developing countries. Democracy that means empowerment of the people derives its ideal implementation when people are well informed and are capable to make rational and objective choices amongst their leaders by selecting those candidates that are most sensitized towards their issues in order to guide national and local policy discourse towards implementation of practices that promote justice, economic and social prosperity, freedom of monetary or other wise choices like religious orientation, enhanced capability to economic and social empowerment through opportunities of commerce with social responsibility and national and local coherence by promotion of common interests.

A well informed population that understands the common human endeavor to a technology future where market processes are facilitated to make up an economically prosperous society sustains the democratic precedence in the country by accounting for socio political systems towards harmonized national definitions of religious freedom without discrimination of ethnicity and creed. (Gutmann,

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2009) So values of freedom of choice that are inherent to a democratic behavior needs to be introduced at grass roots level by not only engaging the household heads that are involved in economic and social networks through commerce and other inherently extrovert economic activities but involvement within the household that makes up youth and women should be increased by facilitating the future culture of the society through less and less conformism to status quo and encouraging setting up of new precedence to post modernism through formal education and indirect participation by sharing informed opinions.

The essence of humanity and its fundamental needs should be the essence of all efforts towards developing democratic values amongst populations and formal institutions of governance through laws that define rights of the individual in accordance with their group identity where differences in ethnicity and religion is muted and multicultural harmony is promoted. The motivations to contribute to social and economic development should come from common welfare rather than individual prosperity. The incentive to contribute to prosperous future at local or national level should be defined by not only material participation in the economy but idea sharing and idea creation of scientific, social, political and economic nature. The change agents in the society should rely more on social capital than material capital to place due recognition of tangible and intangible efforts of process innovation that may mean giving global culture of technology idea a local interpretation by making its application and demand grounded in anthropology and sociology and not only economics (Mittinen, 2013).

For example, based on freedom to practice religion, even an Islamic democracy like Pakistan that is also hosting the most holy Shrines of Sikh religion have facilitated the millions of Sikhs that reside in India (Dalal, 2010) to visit Baba Guru Nanak Shrine that is holiest amongst all of their religious sites without visa by giving access to them through developing a Kartarpur corridor within India Pakistan border. This is unprecedented step towards generalizing the respect for other religions within Islamic identity of Pakistan and thus may be termed as a secular application of freedom of expression within the manifesto of constitution of the country that says Islamic religion should be at the foundation of every law and initiative in Pakistan.

A democratic Pakistan where the Sikhs are a visible minority can now claim that precedence of law and issues of governance not only revolve around all citizens with different ethnicities and religions and may they be a minority but even a solace of inclusive dialogue amongst the populations that reside outside the national borders may benefit from participation in religion other than Islam as a starting point towards a peaceful regional or global community. The localization of global citizenship is confirmed by promoting anthropological trends among various religious groups that seek cultural references from grass roots as is true in case of global Sikh community that rightly expected facilitation from Islamic Pakistan to enable them reaching out to their roots much of which is located within the Pakistani borders.

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